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affecting instances refute the assertion. But the cause of this objection lies in a circumstance which will be readily appreciated. Ireland has been so long the scoff and the derision of England, that Irishmen are extremely—morbidity—sensitive on every thing relative to their own country. They cannot endure that a whisper should be heard against her. They would almost break friendship with one to whom they were much attached, if he gave utterance to a sarcasm on the laud of their birth. And the feeling is natural. It springs from that principle in the human heart which causes us to resent with hatred the contempt of others. But we should control it. If our country is sneered at, let us not indicate soreness, wrath, vexation. No! We should act as if we were above these things. We should show by our disposition that a time is rapidly coming when Ireland *will not afford a sneer*. And instead of boasting, we should act: let all the world not merely know, but let them see, that from the Emerald Isle,

some good can come. To attain this, let every Irishman labour that whatever he is doing, *shall be done well*.

Again, Irishmen are blamed for being hasty in whatever they do. They form hasty attachments—break them as hastily—are easily pleased—easily provoked—soon excited by jealousy, and quickly convinced by candour. Let us take care to avoid this characteristic—for by it we lose a great deal—much more than we gain. A *pretty* face will make Paddy mad to get married—a *fine* fellow will make him anxious to get acquainted—a *sour* look will make him throw every consideration to the winds, and he will fight his friend—a generous action will make him clasp you to his heart, and offer you all he has in the world. But let us avoid this also. Try to keep a guard over the impetuous feelings—be wary—be prudent—and, when necessary be still-minded. If Paddy with his warm heart, had Sandy's caution and John Bull's bluntness, what a fine fellow he would be!



THE BOTANIC GARDENS.

If there be a single citizen of Dublin, who, during this delightful weather, can devote a morning to a visit to the Botanic Gardens at Glasnevin, and *has not*, or will not, do it, we hold him to be a craven philosopher, or a walking polypus—one of those living things who vegetate like the cabbage, with scarcely the attraction, and nothing of the usefulness of that broad-leaved plant. This may be said to be severe—but really at this particular time, when Flora has drawn across the earth her carpet of “purple, green, and gold,” when nature is laughing in her merriest mood, and every bird of the air is sending its glad notes into the empyrean, will man be dull and dead to all that is great and glorious in the works and wonders of the blessed Creator!

Now the citizens of Dublin are a very intelligent people—and of course as Adam was the first botanist, and Eve his wife a lover of fruits and flowers, is it unreasonable to expect that our fellow citizens should be fond of botany? No! so away we speed to *Glasnevin*, “the pleasant little field,” or in corrupted phrase and common parlance, Glasnevin, where those splendid gardens are, of which our metropolis may well be proud. Here, three times a-week, Dr. Litton is to be found, early in the morning—early! why, if eight o'clock be early, then the early risers of Dublin permit the sun to get the start of them prodigiously—our friend, Dr. Litton, is to be found, with good-natured, careful, and painstaking assiduity instructing all who may choose to attend, and giving illustrations clear, practical, and attractive, to his audience on the secrets of the vegetable kingdom. Let no one be deterred, by the idea that the science of botany is difficult to be understood, from attending even an occasional lecture. Something may be gleaned even from an occasional attendance—something worth treasuring up—something which may open not merely the mind but the heart. Every one remembers

the beautiful incident in the travels of Mungo Park—when weary of life, robbed, destitute, far in the interior of Africa, he laid himself down to die—but a small and beautiful moss in full fructification, attracting his eye, in that desert spot, surely, thought the forlorn man, that Being who has taken care of this little product of the earth will take care of ME; and starting up at the thought, he pursued with fresh vigour his way. So have we seen a lovely modest girl, in a remote village patiently attending to the wants and the wishes of a peevish and diseased parent, and apparently unnoticed and unknown, yet creating in the mind of the casual observer, so deep a feeling, so intense an interest, as to awaken within the heart the sentiment of virtue, and kindle the flame of gratitude.

Botany made but a small progress in Ireland till within the last fifty years. It was the well-known Dr. Wade, who may be said to be the founder of the Botanic Gardens at Glasnevin. He drew up a memorial, and presented it to the Irish parliament—and during the course of several years various sums have been granted for this national object. The choice of the ground is exceedingly happy. Glasnevin is one of the most romantic suburbs of Dublin, associated both with historic and classic recollections. In this delightful neighbourhood, once resided, either permanently or transiently, Addison, Swift, Delany, Sheridan, Steele, and Parnell. The demesne itself formerly belonged to Tickel the poet, and was bought from his representatives for the sum of £2000, subject to a ground rent. The garden and its appendages occupy a space of thirty acres—the river Tolka forming a sweeping boundary to one side. The original proposition that the gardens should be placed in the Phoenix Park, on a royal grant, was most happily set aside, for, though the Park is a fit and proper place for the Zoological Gardens, the Botanic Gardens could not be more appropriately situated than where they are. And

what a privilege is it to the citizens of this metropolis, that three times every week, free of all charge, with no trouble but the trouble of going, if *that* be a trouble, can a course of lectures be attended, in a place where every facility exists for comprehending the subjects brought before the mind. And it would be unjust to say that many do not avail themselves of this invaluable privilege. The lecture-room is small, not capable of containing much more than the number that do attend, which is generally about, on an average, from one hundred to a hundred and twenty. As a proof that there exists in the people of Dublin a thirst for botanical knowledge it may be stated, on the authority of the lecturer, that several, who attend regularly, come a distance of four miles. When we consider what trivial creatures we are—how much more prone to fall in love with our breakfast, after a morning walk, than with the loveliest flower that Flora can produce, we may admit that there is here *individual* instances of zeal to profit by the advantages which our good city has—yet we must give it as our opinion, that, in general, that interest is not taken in the science, which opportunities so very valuable afford. Now, the very peasantry of the country have long been famous for their passion for botany. And that the old Irish were well acquainted with it, is evident from the fact, that Keough and Threlkeld were able to obtain *Irish* names for almost every plant they collected. It also appears that considerable advances were made towards a systematic classification. Thus, they called by the genuine name of *Meacan*, such plants as had tap roots; *Brunsean*, such grasses as had creeping roots; *Trathkin*, such as had naked wing stems; *Raithleadh*, such as had imbricated heads, &c. But we are getting at once into the depths of botany.

Ireland, though abounding with a variety of plants, which the exuberance of the soil spontaneously produces, was yet, until a comparatively late period, but little explored. The first attempt of modern times to investigate its botanical productions was made by Doctor Threlkeld. In 1726, he published a short treatise on native plants, especially such as grow in the vicinity of Dublin. He was followed by Keough, and some time after by Dr. Rutty, who, in his "Natural History of the County of Dublin," has devoted some portion to the consideration of its plants. These, with a few incidental notes in Smith's History of Waterford, were all that had been attempted in Ireland, till Doctor Wade, in 1794, published his catalogue. From that period public attention seems to have been strongly excited. The Gardens at Glasnevin were established, a professor appointed, and the public crowded to hear a course of lectures to which they were so liberally invited. Groups of botanical students were now to be seen in all directions exploring the treasures of their native soil, and picking up and inspecting, with curious eye, every little plant which caught their fancy. Now, the meanest looking shrub became an instructive companion to the lover of nature—our young men and our young ladies became ashamed of their ignorance—the flowers that open their little petals, and the insects which disported among their silken folds, had each a story full of interest.

"The simplest floweret of the vale,
The simplest note that swells the gale,
The common air, the earth, the skies,
To them were opening Paradise!"

We are afraid this interest has abated—we hope not considerably.

In our next article on botany, we will give a walk through the gardens.

GREAT PLAGUES.

The following very curious article is translated from an old French book, printed in 1651, entitled, "Le Tableau de la Fortune," by Mr. Chevreux. We are not aware that it was ever, to use the old phrase, "*done into English*," before, and, though not exclusively Irish, we give it as singular and interesting:

"There are very few persons who do not know that famine is occasioned by the dryness of the air, and that its corruption engenders the greatest pestilences. But as there are several species of these, there is one whose cause has not yet been discovered, and in pursuit of which philosophy has most often erred.

"There was a plague in Athens of such a nature that the birds of prey fled from those who had been seized with it, towards the sea; and from the bodies of such as were sick,

little snakes were seen to issue, which fed upon the arms and legs, and which, entering again whenever an attempt was made to touch them, enveloped themselves among the muscles, and caused the patient to endure tortures more insupportable than any that ever were inflicted by the instruments of tyranny.

"Thales of Candia was obliged to go to Lacedæmon to deliver the citizens ("by the charms of his lyre") from a plague with which they had been severely afflicted; and we read in Homer that there also was one among the Greeks whose virulence could not be mitigated except by the charms of music.

"The Phalerians, unable to find either remedy or consolation in a plague, consulted the Oracle in order to learn what would be its final result. The response was that their misery would not cease unless they immolated to Juno a young virgin every year. According to lot, Valeria Luperca was the destined victim. In the midst of this mournful ceremony, of which they made a great mystery, an eagle alighted upon her and bore away the sword of the priest, and placed it upon a heifer, which afterwards served as the victim; and thus the Phalerians with Valeria were delivered from this calamity. In the country of Lacedæmon a like adventure was witnessed in favour of Helen, and this prodigy which astonished the people, prevented them ever after from leading their daughters to the Altar, since they could satisfy the Oracle with beasts.

"When the soldiers of Avidius Crassus, the Lieutenant of Marc Antony, were in the city of Seleucia, they discovered a coffer in the temple of Apollo, on which they laid hands the moment they saw it. But never was avarice better punished, and never was curiosity more fatal than theirs: for there issued from it an air so foul, that after it had infected the whole region of Babylon, it penetrated as far as Greece, and passed by the same route to Italy, causing the third part of the world to perish.

"After the death of Pericles, leader of the Athenians, at the close of the first year of the Peloponnesian war, Thucydides relates that there was a plague so dreadful that it baffled all the powers of medicine, and so general that it descended from Ethiopia into Egypt and Lybia, spread as far as Persia, and ceased not till it had desolated the whole of Greece. This author, who was himself smitten with the disease, gives an astonishing description of it: he says the heat which was felt was so great that some precipitated themselves into wells to obtain relief, while others sought the nearest river where they extinguished this fire only with their lives.

"In the days of Gallus a plague of this kind issued from the coast of Ethiopia, which consumed all the inhabitants to the south, and visited all other parts of the world.

"And although Cardan believed that it would not prevail more than two or three years at the most, owing to the subtilty of the air, which contained it, the winds changing it every hour by their continual agitation; yet it is certain that it lasted for nearly ten years.

"The author of the Chronicles of Great Britain says that in the reign of Caluadrus (?) there was one in that kingdom so protracted that it continued fully eleven years, and so fearful that the living could scarcely supply the demand for graves.

"Three hundred and thirty-one years ago, 30,000 perished by a plague at Cologne, 12,000 at Treves, 16,000 at Mayence, 6,000 at Wormes, 9,000 at Spire, 11,000 or 12,000 at Strasburg, 14,000 at Basle, and a vast number besides in several villages. This calamity alarmed the Germans to such a degree that the majority were more solicitous to abandon than to cultivate their lands, on which account a great portion of the population that remained would have perished miserably with famine, while a similar fate awaited those that had fled, if Sicily had not now proved the granary of Germany, as she was formerly that of Rome.

"Guy de Cholia records that there occurred in his time a plague which afflicted all nature, and which having passed from the Euphrates to the Frozen Ocean, left only the fourth part of the world unvisited. It was then that love and charity disappeared from the earth. The son saw the father expiring without taking the slightest pains to comfort him; the brother and the sister shunned each other as two irreconcilable enemies; the mother abandoned her infant, lest she should carry her own death even in her bosom, and the wife, far from regretting the absence of her husband, feared nothing so much as to meet him. This pestilence was remarkable in this, that amid the great multitude of its victims were found very few of the rich. But two years after, ac.